Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

World History (ABZ)

**Michelangelo’s Artwork**

**(see pp. 5-7 of your packet for your task!)**



***Pieta***, 1498-1500

In 1497, a cardinal requested Michelangelo, who was just 21 years old at the time, to create a sculpture to go into a side chapel at Old St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.  The resulting work – the Pieta – would be so successful that it helped launch Michelangelo’s career unlike any previous work he had done.

The scene of the Pieta shows the Virgin Mary holding the dead body of Christ after his crucifixion, death, and removal from the cross, but before he was placed in the tomb.  This is one of the key events from the life of the Virgin, known as the Seven Sorrows of Mary, which were the subject of Catholic devotional prayers.  The subject matter was one which would have probably been known by many people during the Renaissance.

Shortly after the *Pieta* had been installed in the chapel, Michelangelo reportedly overheard visitors admiring the sculpture, but attributing it to another artist! Later that night, Michelangelo returned to the chapel with a little light and a chisel and carved his name on the sash draped over the Virgin Mary’s breast. This is thought to be the only work Michelangelo signed.



***David***, 1501

In 1501, Michelangelo was 25 or 26 (sources vary) when he began what may be the most famous sculpture in the world, *David*. It took Michelangelo two years to turn what was a 17-foot block of marble into the finished product: a 14-foot statue of the figure from the biblical story “David and Goliath.”

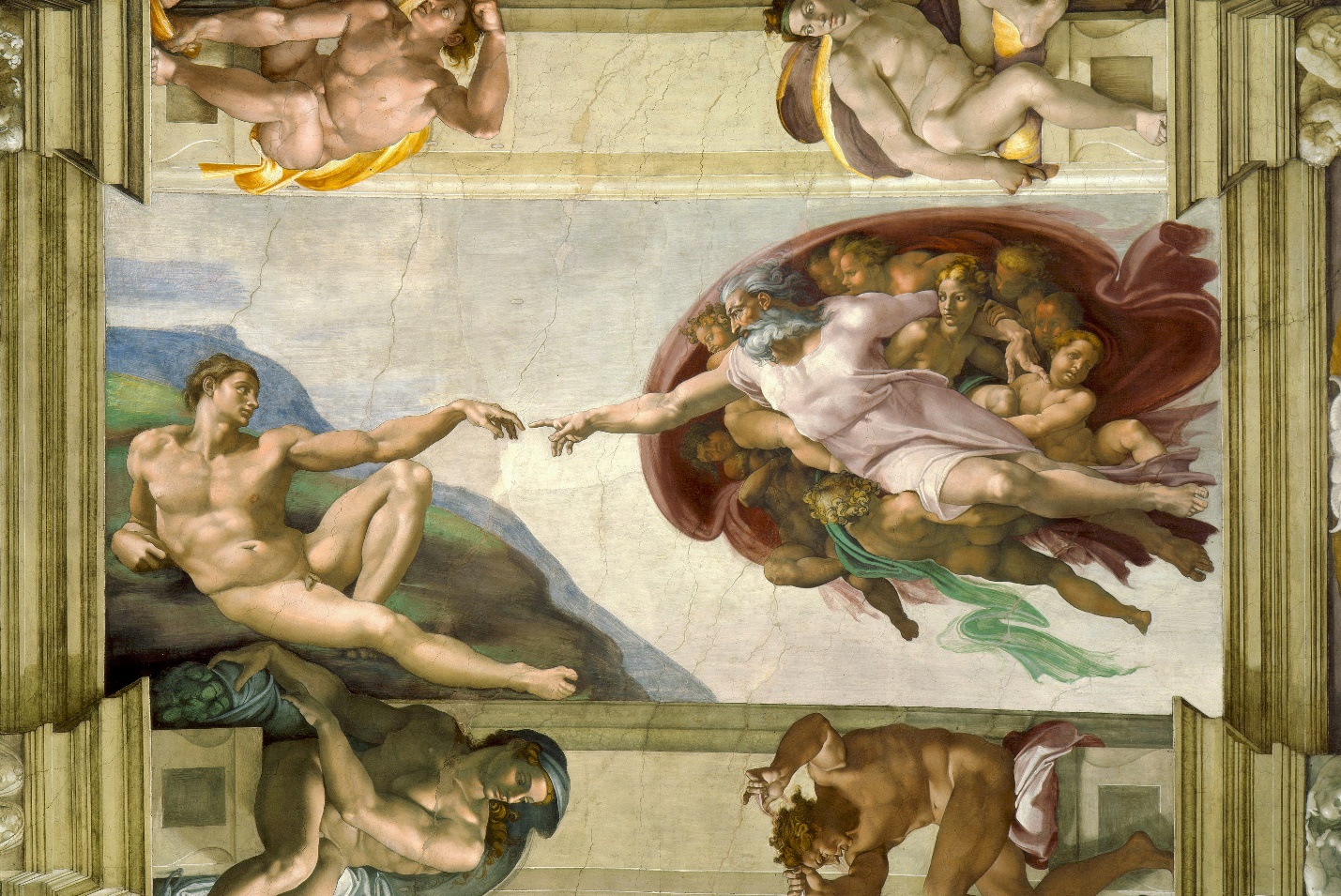
According to Vasari (a historian who lived during Michelangelo’s time), Pier Soderini (the Mayor of Florence) was standing beneath the statue as it was put into place. The Mayor complained to Michelangelo that the nose was too thick. Michelangelo tricked  Soderini by climbing the statue with a chisel and some marble dust concealed in his hand, pretending to work on the nose and sending down a shower of dust, he asked Soderini if it was improved, the Mayor replied  "I like it better, you have given it life"



**The Sistine Chapel,** 1508-1512

In 1508, Pope Julius II (he reigned 1503-1513) hired Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, located next to St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. Michelangelo was famous as a sculpture (thanks to *David* and *Pieta*), but not as a painter! According to Vasari, the pope hired him because the pope had been persuaded by Michelangelo’s rivals (Raphael and Bramante, other artists in Rome during this time). Vasari says they hoped Michelangelo would fail at the task and not be able to rise to the challenge, since he was less accustomed to painting. But!, Michelangelo rose to the challenge, and he produced what is one of the most famous works of interior art in the world today.

The ceiling of the Sistine Chapel shows stories from the first part of the Bible, including the story of Adam and Eve. Below is the most famous painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, *The Creation of Adam*.



**The Creation of Adam**

(part of the Sistine Chapel ceiling)**,** 1508-1512

The Creation of Adam differs from typical Creation scenes painted up until that time.  Here, two figures dominate the scene: God on the right, and Adam on the left.  God is shown floating surrounded by angels who fly without wings, but whose flight is made clear by the drapery which whips out from underneath them. God is depicted as an elderly, yet muscular, man with grey hair and a long beard which react to the forward movement of flight.  This is a far cry from royal images of God that had otherwise been created in the West dating back to the time of late antiquity.  Rather than wearing royal garments and depicted as an all-powerful ruler, God wears only a light tunic which leaves much of his arms and legs exposed.  One might say this is a much more intimate portrait of God because he is shown in a state that is not untouchable and remote from Man, but one which is accessible to him.

Unlike the figure of God, who is outstretched and aloft, Adam is depicted as a lounging figure who rather unenthusiastically responds to God’s imminent touch.  This touch will not only give life to Adam, but will give life to all mankind.  It is, therefore, the birth of the human race.

**Art Analysis**

1. Stare at each piece of artwork for 20 seconds. Then record your observations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Your observations after staring for 20 seconds (stare for a FULL 20 seconds!) |
| ***Pieta*** |  |
| ***David*** |  |
| **Sistine Chapel Ceiling** |  |
| ***Creation of Adam*** |  |

2. Read each piece of artwork’s description, and write down what you learned and found interesting. You may bullet point.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Your Learning/Interesting Findings |
| ***Pieta*** |  |
| ***David*** |  |
| **Sistine Chapel Ceiling** |  |
| ***Creation of Adam*** |  |

3. What questions do you have about each piece of art? Write 1-3 for each piece.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Your Questions (1-3 for each) |
| ***Pieta*** |  |
| ***David*** |  |
| **Sistine Chapel Ceiling** |  |
| ***Creation of Adam*** |  |

4. Tell 3 other people about these artwork in this packet. Then, ask them which piece they like best and why. Record their answer below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Their Preference and Why |
| ***Person #1***  ***Name:*** |  |
| ***Person #2***  ***Name:*** |  |
| ***Person #3***  ***Name:*** |  |

5. SUMMARIZE: Whose artwork do you like better, Michelangelo’s or Leonardo da Vinci’s? Why?

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